

## **KDHE Employee Support Groups Reach Out**

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Studies report that support groups are one of the best methods to help keep a person motivated to make healthy lifestyle changes, and they're free! The KDHE Health and Wellness Committee currently sponsors two employee support groups at the Curtis Building in Topeka. These have been successful thanks to the dedicated employee volunteer group leaders.

Healthy Methods to Manage Diabetes was the first support group established and has continued for the past year. This group meets monthly during lunchtime and provides participants with emotional support, educational resources, and healthy cooking tips.

Our second support group, Weight Management and Healthy Nutrition, began the end of December 2003, just in time for a 2004 New Years resolution. The group members are planning to focus upon making healthy food choices, emotional support, and low impact 'lite' exercises. They plan to meet weekly during lunchtime.

Monthly employee Health and Wellness Lunch Talks were offered on a variety of topics last year, and were well received. Some of the district offices and the laboratories at Forbes Field also sponsored lunch talks and other Wellness programs. A Health and Wellness web page was designed and is now available on the KDHE Intranet: (<http://intranet/hw/index.html>) to keep employees informed of statewide Health and Wellness current events and resources.

The support groups were established because of employee requests to continue with some of the topics discussed at the lunch talks. A popular topic that many employees expressed interest in was "Care-Giver's Stress Reduction Methods." This could become the next Health and Wellness support group.

KDHE employee support groups and other Health and Wellness programs are free and open to all state employees. Please contact us for additional information or to suggest a Lunch Talk topic, at 785-296-1229. Have a healthy and safe new year!